

"Enter Lord Augustus.

Lord Augustus. Good evening, Lady Windermere.

Duchess of Berwick. Sir James, will you take me into the ball-room? Augustus has been dining with us to-night. I really have had quite enough of dear Augustus for the moment.

[Sir James Royston gives the Duchess his arm and escorts her into the ball-room.]

Parker. Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Bowden. Lord and Lady Lord Darlington. Paisley. *[These people enter as announced.]*

Lord Augustus. *{Coming up to Lord Windermere.}* Want to speak to you particularly, dear boy. I'm worn to a shadow. Know I don't look it. None of us men do look what we really are. Demmed good thing, too. "What I want to know—is this. Who is she? Where does she come from? Why hasn't she got any demmed relations? Demmed nuisance, relations! But they make one so demmed respectable.

Lord Windermere. You are talking of Mrs. Erlynne, I suppose? I only met her six months ago. Till then, I never knew of her existence.

Lord Augustus. You have seen a good deal of her since then.

Lord Windennere. *[Coldly.]* Yes, I have seen a good deal of her since then. I have just seen her.

Lord Atigustus. Egad! the women are very down on her. I have been dining with Arabella this evening! By Jove! you should have heard what she said about Mrs. Erlynne. She didn't leave a rag on her. . . . *[Aside,.]* Berwick and I told her that didn't matter much, as the lady in question must have an extremely fine figure. You should have seen Arabella's expression! . . . But, look here, dear boy, I don't know what to do about Mrs. Erlynne. Egad! I might be married to her; she treats me with such demmed indifference. She's deuced clever, too! She explains everything. Egad! she explains you. She has got any amount of explanations for you—and all of them different.

Lord Windermere. No explanations are necessary about my friendship with Mrs. Erlynne.

Lord Augustus. Hem! Well, look here, dear old fellow. Do you think she will ever get into this demmed thing called Society? Would you introduce her to your wife? No, use beating about the confounded bush. Would you do that?

Lord Windermere. Mrs. Erlynne is coming here to-night.

Lord Augustus. Your wife has sent her a card?